



Congressman  
**SHERROD BROWN**

Ohio, 13th District  
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## Fact Sheet

October, 2004

### Update on Flu Vaccine Situation

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On October 5, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that it had been informed by the Chiron Corporation that none of Chiron's flu vaccine, Fluvirin, would be available for the 2004-2005 flu season. Chiron produces approximately one-half of the 100 million doses of flu vaccine CDC anticipated for the 2004-2005 season.

Chiron's vaccine is produced in Great Britain, and the company's license to produce and export the vaccine was suspended for three months by British regulators due to concerns about a tainted supply.

Because of this shortage, CDC has issued the following recommendations:

#### Priority Groups for Influenza Vaccination

The following priority groups for vaccination with inactivated influenza vaccine this season are considered to be of equal importance and are:

- all children aged 6–23 months;
- adults aged 65 years and older;
- persons aged 2–64 years with underlying chronic medical conditions;
- all women who will be pregnant during the influenza season;
- residents of nursing homes and long-term care facilities;
- children aged 6 months–18 years on chronic aspirin therapy;
- health-care workers involved in direct patient care; and
- out-of-home caregivers and household contacts of children aged <6 months.

#### Other Vaccination Recommendations

- Persons in priority groups identified above should be encouraged to search locally for vaccine if their regular health-care provider does not have vaccine available.
- Intranasally administered, live, attenuated influenza vaccine, if available, should be encouraged for healthy persons who are aged 5–49 years and are not pregnant, including health-care workers (except those who care for severely immunocompromised patients in special care units) and persons caring for children aged <6 months.
- Certain children aged <9 years require 2 doses of vaccine if they have not previously been vaccinated. All children at high risk for complications from influenza, including those aged 6–23 months, who present for vaccination, should be vaccinated with a first or second dose, depending on vaccination status. However, doses should not be held in reserve to ensure that 2 doses will be available. Instead, available vaccine should be used to vaccinate persons in priority groups on a first-come, first-serve basis.

#### Vaccination of Persons in Nonpriority Groups

Persons who are not included in one of the priority groups described above should be informed about the urgent vaccine supply situation and asked to forego or defer vaccination.

**Persons Who Should Not Receive Influenza Vaccine**

Persons in the following groups should not receive influenza vaccine before talking with their doctor:

- persons with a severe allergy (i.e., anaphylactic allergic reaction) to hens' eggs
- persons who previously had onset of Guillain-Barré syndrome during the 6 weeks after receiving influenza vaccine

It does not look as if this week's development will hinder the Ohio Department of Health's (ODH) ability to ship vaccine to public health providers. It is important to keep in mind that in any given year, public health provides only about 10 percent to 20 percent of the influenza vaccine distributed. ODH does not provide vaccine to private health care providers.

ODH purchases its vaccine from Aventis, not the affected company, Chiron. ODH has received 260,000 doses of influenza vaccine and is in the process of shipping them to Ohio's local health departments. An additional 12,400 doses are expected to arrive soon. ODH is awaiting shipment of an additional 100,000 doses for the federal Vaccines For Children program, also from Aventis.

***As the flu season progresses, please check back to my website for updates. You may also wish to periodically check the CDC website ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)) and/or the Ohio Department of Health website ([www.odh.state.oh.us](http://www.odh.state.oh.us)).***